



Congressional Record

Mr. BISHOP (GA). I thank the gentleman for yielding. While the Military Construction/VA portion of this bill is not cut as much as some other parts of the continuing resolution, the cumulative effect of this CR is really to hurt our veterans. The bill provides \$74.2 billion, which is \$2.4 billion below the FY 2010; \$1.8 billion below the President's request.

Mr. Chairman, it's time to end the theatrics and get to work. This continuing resolution continues the heated rhetoric. If this bill is signed into law, it will hurt our economic recovery, which in turn will affect our veterans. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 15 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans are unemployed, far higher than the national jobless rate. If we follow through with some of these disastrous cuts, we'll see that rate go higher as the operations in Iraq and Afghanistan wind down and our troops come home seeking employment.

For example, as the gentleman from North Carolina pointed out, we're cutting aid that local governments use to hire police officers. Many of our local police officers are veterans and they are hired with the community oriented policing grants. This will be eliminated. If we cut money for firefighters, this cut will have the same effect as cutting money from the cops. Our veterans will have nowhere to go to continue to serve their communities.

We can do better than this bill. We must be serious because we have serious issues. Veterans have paid the price for the freedoms we enjoy in this country, but freedom is not free. It has been paid for with the lives and the limbs of countless men and women who have served this country in uniform. We owe them better than this.